

TRAINING FOR GOOD JOBS

Aviation Maintenance Training

Starting over two years ago, I began working with legislative colleagues and officials from the Aircraft Maintenance Training program to relocate the program from eastern Connecticut to Brainard Airport. Today there is a new, beautiful facility where post-high school students are trained for airplane mechanics and maintenance. Those who complete this two-year program earn Associate Degrees in Aviation Maintenance Technology. Graduates of this program are in high demand with opportunities to work almost anywhere in the world at attractive starting salaries. The program currently has 43 students and is able to expand to a maximum of 54 students. Contact the Connecticut Aero Tech School for Aircraft Maintenance Training at 860-566-1234, or visit www.cttech.org/brainard.



WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY

Helping People With Rare Skin Disease

Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB) is a rare skin disease that causes a person's skin to be extremely fragile. Some people with this potentially disabling disease require daily wound care that can be very expensive for families, because the bandages may not be covered by insurance. This was the case for the Morris family whose daughter, Racheal, suffers from EB. I am pleased that I was able to work with Representative Russ Morin, who authored the bill, and Senator Paul Doyle to pass legislation that will now require insurance companies to provide coverage for the costs associated with wound care for people with EB.

Helping Families on the Brink of Foreclosure

If you are facing foreclosure, there is help available. This year we expanded two important mortgage assistance programs and passed a new law requiring banks to work with homeowners to explore options before any foreclosure takes place. These programs are administered by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA). Call them toll-free at 1-877-571-2432 for information.

In addition to these legislative initiatives, there is also help available from the Connecticut Fair Housing Center. The CT Fair Housing Center and the University of Hartford Paralegal Program are collaborating to offer assistance to any homeowner facing foreclosure. **Free foreclosure prevention clinics are offered on the 3rd Tuesday of every month** from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the University of Hartford Handel Performing Arts Center, 35 Westbourne Parkway (corner of Albany Ave.). For more information or directions, visit www.ctfairhousing.org or call 860-247-4400.

Dear Neighbor,

This year's legislative session was the most difficult one in my years at the Capitol. The reality is, whether you live in Hartford or Wethersfield, times are tough. Many of us are struggling.

The sad irony of this difficult period is the very time that government is needed the most, we have the least to give. Despite the very difficult choices we had to make to pass a budget a few months ago, it appears that our work is not done. More difficult decisions are ahead.

I believe that it is during these difficult times that you should know where I, as your state senator, stand on how we should balance the budget and what my priorities are. I have opposed cuts that would have unfairly hit those least able to go without—education, seniors, city and town aid, libraries, and health centers are some of the important services that I worked to protect.

Still, in order to pass the budget we had to make substantial reductions. Over \$3 billion was cut and every part of our state will feel the effects of these decisions. But I have used and will continue to use my voice and my vote to oppose efforts to balance the budget on the backs of those least able to afford it.

In this newsletter I have included some of the more significant initiatives of this past session. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to represent you in the Connecticut State Senate.

Sincerely,



John Fonfara
State Senator, 1st District



In November, I was proud to participate in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Lozada Park & Playground in Hartford's Clay Hill neighborhood. The newly renovated park is named for Julio Lozada, a young boy killed nearly thirty years ago when a building collapsed on the property where the park now sits. I helped to secure \$350,000 in state funding that resulted in new additions to the park that include a Boundless Playground, a spray pool and a refurbished basketball court. I am proud to have worked on this with new Fire Chief-designee Ed Casares and community activist Clorinda Soldevila (pictured on right).

State Senator
John Fonfara

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I'm proud to
represent the
1st Senate District:
**Hartford &
Wethersfield**

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State Senator
John Fonfara
1st District

Serving Hartford & Wethersfield

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

OUR STATE BUDGET

WE PROTECTED IMPORTANT JOBS PROGRAMS

- ▶ **CTWorks Career Centers**— A free resource for jobs, training and skill development, career counseling and more. In Hartford, call 860-256-3860.
- ▶ **Jobs Funnel Program**—Provides job training and placement services for those seeking employment in the construction field. See other side of this mailer for more info. 860-524-8859
- ▶ **Small Business Incubators**—This program provides grants to small businesses to grow in innovative ways. 860-282-4201



WE PROTECTED HUSKY

- ▶ The legislature continued the funding for families participating in **HUSKY B**. Learn more about HUSKY by calling 1-877-284-8759.

WE PROTECTED SENIORS

- ▶ We restored funding for **Dial-a-Ride**.
- ▶ We resisted decreases in **Medicaid reimbursements to nursing homes**.
- ▶ We fought to protect **ConnPACE**.
- ▶ We restored \$15 million in funding for **elderly health screenings, geriatric assessment, and senior volunteer programs** that the governor cut in her original budget.



WE PROTECTED SERVICES IMPORTANT TO OUR FAMILIES

- ▶ The **LIFE STAR medical helicopter** has helped save lives in every town and city in Connecticut.
- ▶ **Higher education scholarships** help students and their parents afford college. A recession is the worst time to reduce scholarships and financial aid.
- ▶ **Public libraries** add so much to our towns and cities. Across-the-board cuts, as some proposed, would have hit them hard.
- ▶ **School-based health centers** help protect children from epidemics, such as the flu. Deep cuts to these centers would have undermined public health.

REDUCING YOUR ENERGY COSTS

As Senate chairman of the Energy & Technology Committee I continue to work to provide you with tools to reduce your energy costs. Also, federal stimulus funds are providing significant tax credits to offset the cost of replacing your old boiler and/or windows, the two most significant investments you can make to lower the cost of heating your home. Additionally, there are greater federal and state incentives to install alternative energy solutions such as solar or geothermal technologies.

OPPORTUNITIES TO LOWER YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

The rate you pay for a portion of your electric bill may be lowered by considering a different supplier for your electricity. To learn more about this, call 1-877-947-3873 toll-free, or visit www.ctenergyinfo.com.

STATE INCENTIVES & FEDERAL TAX CREDITS

The Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (www.ctcleanenergy.com) offers substantial rebates for those purchasing solar electric systems and geothermal heat pumps. In addition to substantial state incentives, the federal government is offering tax credits to individuals who invest in making their homes more energy efficient.

Item	How Much	Timing
Insulation, Windows and Doors, Roofing, HVAC, Water Heaters, Biomass Stoves	30% of cost, up to \$1,500	Installed between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2010
Solar Panels, Solar Water Heaters, Geothermal Heat Pumps	30% of the cost	In service before December 31, 2016

For information about these tax credits, visit www.energystar.gov.

HOME ENERGY AUDITS

The Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund offers ways to reduce monthly energy bills through their in-home programs. Efficiency experts visit your house or apartment to conduct a comprehensive energy assessment. Residential energy audits are available to all residents for a one-time fee of \$75. Call 1-877-947-3873 or visit www.ctenergyinfo.com.

In August, I was joined by Hartford Police Chief Daryl Roberts outside the police department substation on Affleck Street to discuss the importance of the H.P.D.'s efforts to crack down on crimes that affect quality of life in the city. I obtained \$100,000 in state funding for the department to step-up their efforts to enforce quality of life violations such as excessive noise, street racing and drug dealing.



HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM FOR OUR STATE



The cost of health care and prescription drugs is greater than most of us know. Most people with health insurance rarely review the costs of a doctor visit or a procedure. Most of us do not know the actual cost of a prescription unless it is no longer covered by our insurance. Only then do we realize how incredibly costly our health care system is.

Many of my constituents don't have the luxury of just imagining what it would be like to not have health insurance. Unfortunately, they are living it everyday. Many are hardworking providers

for themselves and their families, working long hours with no coverage. Many ignore health problems until they are sicker than they had to be. We're all paying for this system through higher insurance rates and higher taxes. We're paying for it in the reduced quality of life of the community we all live in.

That's why I strongly supported a comprehensive proposal to achieve real health care insurance reform in Connecticut called the **SustiNet Health Partnership**. The passage of SustiNet means that Connecticut is well-positioned to take advantage of any health care reform that passes Congress and become a national leader in this critical area.

For more information about SustiNet and the goals we are working toward for health care in Connecticut, visit www.universalhealthct.org.

Wethersfield School Readiness Initiative

With the support of the Graustein Memorial Fund, the Wethersfield Early Readiness Council is hoping to undertake an exciting two-year initiative—to develop a comprehensive Community Plan to identify priorities and create a road map for improving the lives of all children in Wethersfield. The ability of Wethersfield's children to succeed academically is directly linked to each child's readiness to learn when they walk into school on the first day. I am eager to work with the Wethersfield community to make the most of this opportunity, and thank the Early Readiness Council for its leadership on behalf of our children.

Cracking Down on Illegal Street Racing

Illegal street racing has been a growing problem in Hartford, posing a danger not only to the racers themselves but also to other motorists, pedestrians and residents. It has also greatly impacted the quality of life in the areas where the racing occurs. I am especially proud to have worked with my colleague, Representative Hector Robles, who introduced the bill, to create tougher fines and penalties for those who engage in illegal street racing. This law will allow the police to temporarily impound motor vehicles used in street racing for 30 days, effectively removing them from local streets and communities.

